


BOW & ARROW

A man with a beard, wearing a camouflage jacket and a dark hat, is shown in a forest setting. He is aiming a wooden bow with a red arrow. The background consists of tall, thin trees with yellow autumn foliage under a blue sky.

1CD 50 CENTS

JANUARY-FEBRUARY

**BOWSTRING
SAFARI TO
SANTA CRUZ**

Profile of a Champ: **Helen Thornton**
Exclusive Report:
LEUPOLD OPTICAL SIGHT

**Olympic Training
For Juniors**

BOONDOCKS AND BOWSTRINGS

By Jim Dougherty



Author draws Bear's Super Magnum as he warms up for a Santa Cruz ram.

**Santa Cruz Island,
Newly Opened To
Bowhunters, Is A Gem
In The Blue Pacific,
But Within Easy Range
Of The Archer!**

THE islands of the Pacific have been a source, a mecca, for writers, poets and troubadours for centuries. Tales of islands — rich in adventure, pregnant with history — have enriched our lives and created a haven for the wandering mind since Robert Louis Stevenson first wrote of Hawaii.

Granted, most of these tales had their setting in the South Pacific, home of brown-eyed maidens dancing to pagan rituals with a hibiscus behind the ear. Knowing which ear meant available or not could save you a lot of trouble. However, the Pacific plays host to many islands closer to home and perhaps only slightly less exotic than Tahiti or Bora Bora, yet considerably less expensive to visit and quite exciting to see in their own right. Among them are the group of islands rising a few miles off the Southern California coast.

A great deal has been said in BOW & ARROW in the past few years about the hunting opportunities that exist on one of the islands that make up this chain: Santa Catalina. Here the bowhunter has been allowed to hunt wild goats and boar with excellent success. Even better, available season has come at that time of year when other hunting activities are at a standstill.

Hunting the offshore islands is a source of pleasure and intrigue for me. To set foot on any island gives me a strange sense of adventure, no matter how many have been there before me.

This fascination, coupled with a phone call, gave birth to the events that make up this story. I picked up the phone, and the deep and ominous voice stated, "James, this is I." Now I have to admit frankly that I never am sure just what "I" is supposed to represent when Jack Lewis calls. We have this Double 0 thing around the Gallant office, and I haven't quite figured whether he is simply mentioning the fact that it is in truth the boss himself, or whether he expects that all of his Double 0 field personnel should treat him as though he were four letters senior to James Bond's "M." Thus far I have managed to get by with a respectful, "Yes, sir," but one day I'm bound to ask, "Whoinhell is I?"

"I" — or he — then went on to state that I should stand by on the coming weekend for a field assignment, that I should be ready to leave Sunday, packing along a particular bow, take this, expect that, ad infinitum.

I did manage to pick up the meatier portions of the orders which, translated, meant that I was going to Santa Cruz Island, hunting for wild sheep and boar.



I was to test the new Bear *Super Magnum* bow. It was pointed out that this was a full-scale operation, as I was to be traveling in Big Company. Both Lewis and Ray Rich would accompany me, I would accompany them, or whatever — at least, we all were going together.

From nearly 3,000 feet, as I looked down onto the beauty that is Santa Cruz, the island fairly leaped from the ocean's surface. Steep rocky cliffs guard her shores from approach by sea along most of the ocean frontage. These cliffs form no barrier to the Cessna 310, whose twin engines pulled us up over those rocky crags and into the interior. From the air Santa Cruz looks rugged and formidable; to reach her ridges from the canyon bottoms on foot would be no easy task, and to descend again would be an even more perilous trip.

As the 310 began its final approach into the air strip in the bottom of a valley, I contented myself with the fact that here was an island of extreme beauty, not about to be conquered easily, if at all, by some island-struck nut with a forty-eight-inch hunk of wood and glass and a shoulder quiver of razor-sharp shafts.

Santa Cruz is a privately owned island, where hunting is a relatively new venture under the direction of the Santa Cruz Island Hunt Club, whose directors have obtained the rights for the operation from the owner of eighty-five percent of this waterbound real estate. The Santa Cruz Island Company operates most of the island as a cattle ranch, but raising prime beef is not the company's only concern. Keeping the natural beauty of the island unspoiled and practicing good range management through controlled hunting also are major concerns of the firm.

Jack Valenti throttled back on the roaring engines of the Cessna and dropped into the field in a casual manner.

A group of guides and outgoing hunters loaded down with game greeted our arrival. The departing party of gun hunters had scored big, as evidenced by the pile of trophy ram heads and meat they were loading onto a single-engine Cessna 172 for the return trip. My archery assortment extracted a bit of comment from the departing gunners, who looked at the close range arsenal with casual interest. One gentleman looked over the equipment and asked, "Ever shoot anything with one of those?"

"Yes, sir. I have," I replied.

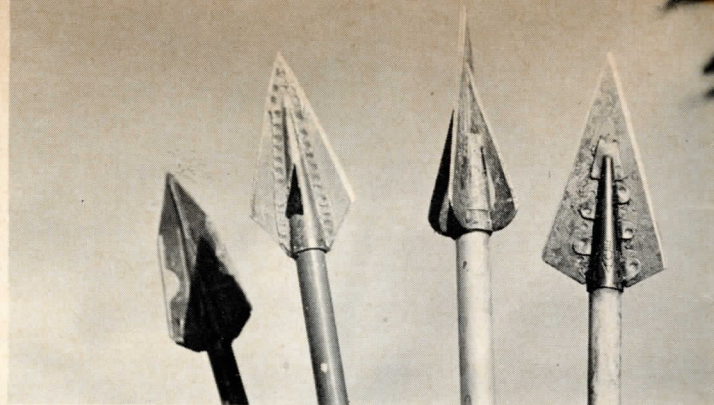
"Son, you are going to have a ball," was his considered opinion as he boarded the Cessna.

Don Capelli introduced himself as our guide for the two-day hunt. A tall, somewhat lean and competent looking guy, he impressed me with his direct manner. After introductions Don stated in flat and even terms, "There will be no loaded guns in my jeep, no smoking while we are driving and no litter. Any litter will be placed in the jeep. No drinking while we are hunting."

I've ramrodded a few hunters here and there and was impressed with his direct way of getting the facts straight. He expected certain rules of the island to be enforced, and I silently commended him.

So began the Battle of Santa Cruz. With good leadership and stalwart companions, the affair of the sheep was launched — and quite an affair it was.

The first item of business was checking out the rifles that Rich and Lewis had brought along, as they were doing a story for GUN WORLD, our companion publication. I, in turn, had brought along a lead pusher; a Ruger .357 magnum revolver. While the



The point of the whole thing was to see how fast and how straight *Super Magnum* would deliver hunting hardware.



Dougherty unloads the tools of his trade from a Cessna 310 flying taxi.

Author made it within good shooting distance of this ram, his stalk aided by stream noises, but unfamiliarity with the speed of the short bow resulted in humiliating miss.



leaders sighted in the long barrels, I blew chunks out of the accommodating hillside with 158-grain lead bullets, then looked to my bowhunting gear.

The Bear *Super Magnum* is only forty-eight inches long, which I understand is about four feet, if you're interested in conversion tables. Naturally there are limitations to such a short piece of equipment, but just how severe these limits were I was not sure as yet.

The changing light of sundown colored our first excursion into the interior of Santa Cruz. Don pointed the four-wheel drive Ford *Bronco* up a long steep ridge, the low range growled and lifted us slowly into the higher ridge-top home of the Santa Cruz rams. What was anticipated as a short exploratory trip turned into a five-hour endurance struggle for Lewis, who neatly whopped a good ram, sending it tumbling into the bottom of a hell hole of a canyon. Two hours after dark, our fearless publisher gained the sanctuary of the truck and collapsed with a low moan next to the caped-out head of his trophy. He was justly pleased in accomplishing the purpose for which he had come to Santa Cruz, even if it did pretty near kill him.

Dinner was enough to bring him back to the legion of the living; thick steaks barbecued on the porch of our campsite. From the porch the stars peeked through the low scudding fog clouds while the pounding surf over the rocks set my mood. In the distance, the lights on Santa Rosa Island, four miles away, winked at the flashing beacon of a live bait boat working the channel for a school of anchovies. Full and content, I sat there relaxing and stroking the blades of the broadheads to a razor edge. Tomorrow it was going to be my turn.

The crashing waves held me deep in sleep, the sounds pouring through the open window by my head.

I awoke to the blaring of Ray's portable clock-radio banging out the lament of some poor soul who "can't get no satisfaction." I yanked on my Levis, laced my boots and staggered into the dining room where my partners already were assembled. As our meager breakfast — four pounds of ham, two dozen eggs and the usual trimmings — was being prepared, the Good Guys of the Gallant Group loaded their gear into the *Bronco*.

We left the ancient Christi Adobe headquarters as the sun was just touching the plains of wild oats. Island fox were abundant and we sighted eleven in one mile. These little fox are of a separate group, *island-eris*, and although their coloring is that of the common gray fox, *urocyon cinereoargenteus*, their features are quite different and the size about half that of the larger gray. Completely protected, they have no natural enemies on any of the islands and are quite unafraid of man and his machines. Here on Santa Cruz they are astonishingly abundant, while on Catalina they are not sighted as frequently.

My first chance for a bow shot came right off the road as we headed for a distant canyon. A nice but smallish boar scampered up a draw and began feeding. With Don and my partners watching I began a stalk through the wet grass. My shooting with the *Super Magnum* had been limited to close range practice in the downstairs range of my store.

As I closed to twenty yards the boar turned as if to offer me every advantage and present a going away quarter angle shot, which is to my mind the best for an arrow. I missed. I not only missed once but twice more, and I had grabbed only three arrows out of the King shoulder quiver when I left the jeep.

The last shot was the one that really fractured me. The boar suddenly became aware that all was not



Almost invisible in circle at left, one ram eyes hidden photographer as another grazes while Dougherty sneaks up with nefarious intent. Needless to say, this stalk failed.



Foxes have no enemies on Santa Cruz, and the hunting party spotted many.



Author's ram, right, joins a trophy row bagged by rifle hunters during this gun-and-arrow safari to Santa Cruz.

right and took off on a broadside run that took him by no farther than fifteen yards; a cinch shot. I was a full three feet behind his kinky tail with what I had felt to be ample lead. Standing there dismayed and rather chagrined at having others witness my performance, I watched the boar go down in a heap at the same time that the roar of Lewis' .30-06 shattered the silence.

With such a beginning I had no way to go but up. As the gang of gunners looked to the freshly gathered bacon I looked to my bow and began shooting rocks, cactus and dirt clods in a frenzy. I found that the *Super Magnum* shot nice and straight, but the difference in speed between her and the longer *Kodiak* was more than a little noticeable. By comparison, it would appear that the point-on distance between two bows of equal weight would show a difference of almost a third.

The journey to the area chosen for the day's hunt was interrupted some time later while Ray Rich made a short hunt on a group of rams. He did a bit of fancy shooting and collected a nice ram, which naturally left him a bit more jubilant than I.

"Okay you guys" I told them, "now it's time for the dart shooter. Don, find me a canyon with rams and cover for I am about ready to jab one of these wooly critters."

In a deep canyon bordered with sprawling oaks and wild oats I began a stalk on a band of rams. The canyon bottom hosted a clear stream. The day was growing warm, and as the upper ridges grew hot the sheep

began to trek into the canyon in search of shade and water.

Slipping from rock to rock with water running over my boot tops and into the dry wool of my socks I crept into range of a band of five rams, all respectable and unaware of my presence. Crossing a dry sandbar my toes squished in the socks, and I had the distinct impression that I was walking on sponges. The sheep couldn't hear the "slurp-slurp" of my approach, but mentally I cringed with each cautious step. In the canyon bottom the sound of running water concealed my squishy approach and the soft *thuuung* as the shaft left the little black bow.

Fifty-five pounds propelled the heavy glass arrow tipped with a four-blade Black Diamond toward a big ram. It seemed certain that a collision course had been established, but I was startled to see the shaft suddenly fall off and pass below the chest of the big ram. The arrow rattled off the rocks, sheep exploded everywhere, and rams that I hadn't seen bolted from secluded shadows. In a group they headed for the top and safety. In the milling confusion I watched the full-curl ram of my choice lose himself in the security of the crowd and climb to the upper ridges. Several smaller but satisfactory rams made themselves vulnerable to shots from my position, but I held off.

Thoughts of how I was going to handle the next opportunity filled my mind as I set out once more. The short limbs of the SM had plenty of power for a short distance, but failed to lend themselves to flat shooting over a fair distance. The *Super Magnum* is a

specialty bow, designed in my mind for the explicit situation of short range, cramped-quarter shooting.

With this thought I began a stalk on another ram a short time later, as he fed in the belly-deep grass with a smaller sidekick. As carefully as possible, I slid into position behind a cutbank and drew several long breaths. Above me not twenty yards away the two sheep fed in peaceful serenity. A small gust of wind swirled the dust and I sank back down waiting for the breeze to subside.

I reasoned that should I make the top of the bank the sheep would be twenty yards at the furthest, maybe only fifteen. The shot would have to be taken in a hurry as I was half over the top, because they were certain to spot me immediately. Once more I checked the arrow position on the string and laid my index finger firmly over it to hold it in place.

Patting the medal around my neck for luck I started over the top and into a choice situation. Both animals had their heads stuck deep in the lush forage. The vision that is slightly impaired by swirling horns was doubly restricted by the grass — no reason to hurry. The SM is quiet when it sends its shaft away, and the ram's peaceful foraging was interrupted only when the shaft drove home. Puzzled, it leaped forward and stood, giving me time to put one more next to the first and a bit higher.

This was enough for both the smaller ram and the fatally stricken larger sheep. Both started down the canyon, passing through the oaks at a trot and offering me a chance to loose one more shaft at forty yards. As the big ram found out, it was one more too many. When I got to him he was down for the count.

The sheep of Santa Cruz are descendants of Merino or Rambouillet sheep that originated in France. This same type of sheep haunts the ridges of Hawaii's Big Island, offering a fascinating attraction to traveling big game hunters. The heavy layer of wool that they carry at all times during the year forms a barrier that raises the devil with a penetrating broadhead.

Penetration with the fairly heavy *Super Magnum* was less than fifty percent of the total shaft length. On an animal of equal weight and construction, but without this wool, I would have assumed complete penetration to be the rule. Possibly the fact that the bow does not throw arrows with the authority of a longer bow adds to this. If the goats of Catalina are famed for their tenacity, then the sheep of Santa Cruz will have to be legendary. Gun hunters have found that the sheep can carry more lead than a junk wagon, and based on my experience, they can carry arrows without undue strain, too.

Late that afternoon I began a descent into a rough canyon. At the bottom I was to meet the *Bronco* and the rest of the gang. Here my selection of a shoulder quiver made itself obvious as the wrong choice. I am not one for shoulder quivers and broadheads — they dull the heads and the clatter sounds like a disoriented marimba player with two broken wrists. However, I realize my limitations, and quite honestly I wanted to carry more arrows than I could stuff into any specialty hunting quiver, so I rattled down the canyon.

Each time I ducked my head to go under the low brush I was dragged up short by a quiver that didn't quite make it. In total exasperation I sat in a clump of trees and said dirty words for a rather lengthy period of time. My discourse finished and a sense of calm having been restored, I kind of relaxed and looked up

into the eyes of a ram that had come wandering up the trail to see what the colorful swearing was all about.

If the *Super Mag* has its long range problems, it equalizes them when it comes to maneuverability. Sitting flat on my rear with both legs straight out in front, I was still able to draw the bow and get a comfortable sight picture. I managed to zork the ram, then had to hit him several more times before he decided that he was dead. These critters are indeed tenacious!

There followed a period that I would really rather not recount, but in recalling and noting that I survived there is some small satisfaction. Stumbling down the canyon encumbered by equipment and goodies, I kept encountering little spots where the bottom fell out and a hundred feet of empty space lay between my feet and the next closest rock. It is tedious to come face to face with a solid drop-off and realize that now you have to go back "cause you got no wings to fly with." Getting out of that canyon was not one of my most fun experiences.

The affair of the boar didn't add to the glory of the trek in any way, either. I suddenly noticed that in spite of my rather clumsy approach a large coal-black boar was lying asleep in my path, and my natural reaction was to shoot him. When he stood up I shot him full in the shoulder with a genuine arrow. This did nothing for his disposition, which was poor to begin with. He growled, squealed and grunted, and I was immediately sorry that I had offended him because it

Continued on page 49

Hunting is heavy work, and after all that exercise there is nothing like forty winks to restore one's enthusiasm.



was painfully obvious that the arrow hadn't hurt him.

Shouldering head and quiver I then once more began my descent, two hundred feet of which I took in one glorious, falling, sliding plunge — scattering arrows all the way. Crippled, bloody, irritable and beat, I finally made the rendezvous in the canyon where I was informed that there was neither cold beer nor water, but “we do have some candy bars.” Thanks, guys.

The barbeque sent blue strings of smoke up over Santa Cruz. It may not have been the island's best

I arose early the following morning, and with a rod and reel borrowed from the guide I made the short trip to the long smooth beach where the tide was beginning to build. The sun was warm on my back as I stripped off my boots and baited a single hook with a chunk of abalone. Bait was easy to come by, since the low tide had stranded thousands of abalones, both pinks and blacks. The sand crabs were there in huge quantities and mussels lined the rocks.

By high tide I had caught all the fish I could keep and released many more. Standing in the high breaking waves I felt smaller fish bump my legs on several occasions, indicating that from all aspects of a sportsman's choice the island of Santa Cruz is indeed a paradise for the man who wants to get outside. The chance for bowhunters to hunt Santa Cruz is coming. Don't miss it! Take a rod and reel and maybe, if I'm lucky, I'll see you there. •

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